REMARKS

In the Office Action, the drawings were objected to because of informalities. The specification was objected to because the title was not descriptive. Claim 4 was objected to because of informalities. Claims 1 and 5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Applicant's admitted prior art in view of Sato et al. (Japanese Pat. App. Pub. No. JP 2001-311470). Claim 4 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Applicant's admitted prior art in view of Sato et al., as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Sato et al. (Japanese Pat. Pub. App. Pub. No. JP 2000-100125).

Amended claim 1 clarifies the following structures:

(1) the extension portion 9 extends from the base portion 6 toward the outer peripheral side of the plate 2 only near the screw fixing portion 5 and inflection portions 8, 10 of the packing 3, and

(2) the base portion 6 near the screw fixing portion 5 and the inflection portions 8, 10 tends to be peeled off rom the plate 2 when the lip portion 7 is bent, and the extension portion 9 prevents the base portion 6 from being peeled off from the plate 2.

Amended claim 4 clarifies the following structures in accordance with the Examiner's suggestions:

(3) the packing 3 is formed on the plate 2, and

(4) the elastic material left in the pouring hole 12 of the mold 11 used to form the packing 3 forms a protrusion 13 on the top of the extension portion 9.

The applicant's admitted prior art cover gasket for an HDD, as described on pages 1 to 2 of the present application and illustrated in Figures 5 to 7 in the present application, includes the cover plate 52 and packing 53 bonded on the flat surface of the cover plate 52 in a given pattern. As shown in Figure 6, the packing 53 has an asymmetrical shape in cross section with respect to a width direction thereof. When the cover plate 52 is screwed to the opposing base plate 55, as shown in Figure 7, the lip portion 54 is bent to an inner peripheral side of the cover plate 52 by a compressive load. At the time, a bending moment M (in a left rotating direction in Figure 7) is exerted in the packing 53 by a compressive force. Dustproof and air sealing functions can be obtained by bending the lip portion 54.

However, since a larger bending moment M is exerted in the packing 53 near the screw fixing portion 56 on the cover plate 52 than is exerted on the other portions, the packing 53 has been apt to be peeled off from the cover plate 52 at an area near the screw fixing portion 56. The prior art does not overcome a problem of peeling off (detachment) of the packing.

An object of the present invention si to provide a gasket having a construction in which a packing cannot be peeled off rom a plate by a bending moment. Accordingly, the present invention prevents the peeling off of the packing by the above structure (1).

The two new references cited in the Office Action neither disclose nor suggest (1) and (2) in the above structures.

The first reference (JP2001-311470A) discloses a cover gasket having the same shape in cross section all over the periphery (see Figure 2 in the first reference). An object of the invention in the first reference is to prevent the cover gasket 6 from being bent or peeled off when the top cover 1 is opened. In other words, the invention of the first reference does not prevent the cover gasket 6 from being peeled off from the flat portion 2, when the top cover 1 is closed and the lip portion 8 is bent.

Accordingly, even if the cover gasket of the first reference is applied to the Applicant's admitted prior art cover gasket, it will be impossible to obtain the structure in which the extension portion is provided only on the area where the base plate tends to be peeled off when the plate is screwed to the opposing assembly member.

The second reference (JP2000-100125A) discloses a gasket in which protrusions 5 are provided on the desired positions on the elastic body 2 to leave the

pouring gate remnants 4 in order to eliminate the step of removing the burrs caused by the pouring spots.

An object of the invention in the second reference is not to prevent the elastic body 2 from being peeled off from the base plate 1 when the sealing projections 3a and 3b are bent. Accordingly, even if the gasket of the second reference is applied to the Applicant's admitted prior art cover gasket, it will be impossible to obtain the structure in which the extension portion is provided only on the area where the base plate tends to be peeled off when the plate is screwed to the opposing assembly member.

Concerning dependent claims 4 and 5, they are patentable since they depend on amended claim 1 which is also patentable.

Based on the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the claims in the present application, as they now stand, patentably distinguish over the references cited and applied by the Examiner and are, therefore, in condition for allowance. A Notice of Allowance is in order, and such favorable action and reconsideration are respectfully requested.

However, if after reviewing the above amendments and remarks, the Examiner has any questions or comments, he is cordially invited to contact the undersigned attorneys.

Respectfully submitted,

JACOBSON HOLMAN PLLC

By: _____
John C. Holman
Reg. No. 22,769

400 Seventh Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20004-2201
Telephone: (202) 638-6666
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